

Howard County Commission for Transitioning Students with Disabilities
Meeting Minutes
November 9, 2017

Attendees:

Rob Baynard, Beth Benevides, Patrick Boxall, Katie Collins-Ihrke, Michelle Henry, Keri Hyde, Kathy Land, Dianne Nagle, Cindy Parr, Sharon Plump, Dawson Robertson, Ann Scholz, Clara Scholz, Stephanie Wallace

Guests:

Naysha Conway (Humanim), Sarah Hammond (HCPSS), Doris Jacobs (Humanim), Tracey Mack (Service Coordination), Barbara Moyer (Arc of Howard County, Project Search), Judi Olinger (Humanim), Brian Welsh (parent)

Absent:

Stephanie Chapple, Kathy Conwell, Stephanie Discepolo, Chris Glover, Wanda Hutchinson, Colette Jackson, Erica Lewis, Kathy McSweeney, Lisa Ott, Laura Parsons, Susan Potts, Jemira Sarratt, Terri Savage, Dana Shourbaji, Kami Wagner, Janice Yetter

Meeting called to order at 8:33am

Welcome and Introductions

The Commission welcomed Judi Olinger (Humanim) and Brian Welsh (parent), two new members who will testify before the County Council on November 20, 2017, for appointment to the Commission. Once appointed, both will serve on the Employment Workgroup.

Approval of Minutes

C. Parr made a motion to approve the September 14, 2017, meeting minutes.
A. Scholz seconded the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Office of Children and Families Update

K. Hyde shared information on several programs sponsored by the Office of Children and Families.

A date has not yet been set for a meeting of the chairs of boards and commissions. M. Henry offered to schedule a meeting of the co-chairs of the Commission with the chairs of the Commission on Disability Issues.

K. Hyde expects the marketing flyer for the Commission to be completed by the end of the calendar year.

Workgroup Reports

Education: A. Scholz shared information on the Reservoir High School “Post High School Opportunities Fair” – a job fair focused on careers that do not require a college degree. Representatives from a variety of career fields will present to students. The fair is

a collaborative effort of the guidance counselor and transition teacher. It has been promoted to college seniors who have not yet applied to college, students who have a GPA of 2.5 or lower, and students seeking a certificate.

The Transition Team pilot has expanded from Hammond and Long Reach High Schools to Wilde Lake, Howard, Marriotts Ridge, and Homewood.

B. Benevides shared that Kami Wagner had been in touch about the counseling office's representation on the Commission. Kelly Ruby, the new coordinator for school counseling, will participate on the Commission going forward.

The Family Support and Resource Center has created a networking group for families of transitioning students. "Chat and Chew" at Wegmans will begin in January on a monthly basis. Parents will meet informally and share ideas and information. A. Scholz will facilitate and speakers will be invited on occasion.

D. Robertson and J. Yetter are working on videos for the website about the various HCPSS work programs (Project Search, Community Connections, work/study, enclave, ARL, etc.).

A college workshop for parents and students is being planned for May 2018. It will cover such topics as accommodations and modifications, IDEA v. ADA 504, self-advocacy, etc. This would be a joint collaboration of HCC Project Access and HCPSS.

The education workgroup has suggested the development of a standard parent presentation on transition. This presentation would be offered at each school by the transition teacher. L. Parsons has provided the materials she has developed over the years. D. Robertson and the transition teachers will work together to create a common PowerPoint with a goal of completion by February 2018.

Projections of 14-21 Year Old Students with IEPs in HCPSS

B. Benevides distributed the data charts provided by MSDE/HCPSS on the projected number of students 14-21 with IEPs in HCPSS from the current school year (2017-18) through the next five school years (2021-22). Variables can change, so it was recommended that the data be considered with caution.

P. Boxall noted the projected growth of 839 students with IEPs over the next five years. He posed the following questions: how will the school system prepare for the additional demand? How will the school system build capacity to meet the needs of these additional students?

S. Wallace suggested that we consider providing support to students earlier. Some students are not making sufficient progress by 11th grade to meet graduation requirements.

Employment: Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre ETS) were discussed. Agencies are actively being recruited to provide these services to HCPSS transitioning students. It was noted that the DORS approval process for Pre-ETS proposals was months long and agencies are still waiting for approval. The demand is here; the services are not.

S. Plump shared that DORS is creating a mailer to explain Pre-ETS.

Best Buddies is hosting a networking event at Union Jacks on November 28 at 5pm. Their “minute to hire” campaign has been well received.

C. Parr met with Leonardo McClarty of the Chamber of Commerce and shared information about the Commission and its interest in connecting with businesses. It was agreed that a member of the Commission should engage with the Chamber—actively sitting on a group, or committee—rather than adding a Chamber member to the Commission. C. Parr to follow up on behalf of the Commission.

S. Discepolo has offered a tour of the ARL to Commission members. B. Benevides to follow up with her to schedule date(s).

Community: Trainings on person-centered planning will be offered by Michael Small at the Transition Symposium (March 24).

K. Collins-Ihrke is planning to meet with the Office of Community Resources to discuss faith-based communities and how they may offer community-based support to people with disabilities.

The Housing Resource Guide is available from ARI.

National Inclusive Schools Week

B. Benevides spoke with Dr. Martirano and Executive Kittleman about actively promoting Inclusive Schools Week (Dec 4-8) in all schools. Both were very supportive. B. Benevides is coordinating with Nancy FitzGerald and Brian Bassett (HCPSS PIO). Posters have been purchased by the Howard County Autism Society for every school.

Member Updates

D. Robertson shared that the school system participated in the Effective Transition Practices Self-Assessment administered by MCIE and MSDE. Parent representatives (B. Benevides, C. Jackson, and A. Scholz) participated in the assessment along with ITLs, transition teachers, high school resource teachers, DSE leadership, and a representative from counseling. From this assessment, HCPSS will meet with MSDE to review results and develop a long-range plan in December. M. Henry expressed concern that a greater sample of parents were not involved in the survey.

N. Conway shared that Start on Success has 15 students enrolled for internships beginning in January 2018.

D. Nagle provided information on an upcoming workshop, Brain-Based Learning, sponsored by Project Access. Flyers were distributed. The HCC Project Access website has been updated.

C. Scholz and B. Moyer provided an update on Project Search. The second rotation of internships has just begun. One family information night has been held. The application for 2018-19 Project Search is available online.

R. Baynard shared that DDA has released its new rates structure. A town hall will be held on Wednesday, November 15, 7pm, at Owen Brown Interfaith Center. C. Parr encouraged people to read the document online as well as the new service definitions.

K. Collins-Ihrke provided information from the ARI Newsletter—several free or low-cost programs are now offered by ARI (e.g., cooking, dating and relationships, housing, beating the blues, presents on the penny).

Closing

The meeting was adjourned at 10:31am.

Future Meetings:

January 11, 2018 (8:30-10:30am) – Roger Carter Community Center

March 8, 2018 (8:30-10:30am) – Roger Carter Community Center

May 10, 2018 (8:30-10:30am) – Roger Carter Community Center